

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Please amend the claims in the subject patent application as follows:

1. (Original) A catalyst system which consists essentially of (a) an organolithium compound, (b) a calcium alkoxide and (c) a lithium alkoxide.
2. (Original) A catalyst system as specified in claim 1 wherein the molar ratio of the lithium alkoxide to the calcium alkoxide is within the range of about 1:1 to about 20:1.
- A, 3. (Currently Amended) A catalyst system as specified in ~~claim 4~~ claim 1 wherein the molar ratio of the alkyl lithium compound to the calcium alkoxide is within the range of about 1:1 to about 6:1.
4. (Currently Amended) A catalyst system as specified in ~~claim 5~~ claim 2 wherein the calcium alkoxide is selected from the group consisting of calcium dimethoxide, calcium diethoxide, calcium diisopropoxide, calcium di-n-butoxide, calcium di-sec-butoxide, calcium di-t-butoxide, calcium di(1,1-dimethylpropoxide), calcium di(1,2-dimethylpropoxide), calcium di(1,1-dimethylbutoxide), calcium di(1,10-dimethylpentoxide), calcium di(2-ethyl-hexanoxide), calcium di(1-methylheptoxide), calcium diphenoxide, calcium di(p-methylphenoxide), calcium di(p-octylphenoxide), calcium di(p-nonylphenoxide), calcium di(p-dodecylphenoxide), calcium di( $\alpha$ -naphthoxide), calcium di( $\beta$ -naphthoxide), calcium (o-methoxyphenoxide), calcium (o-methoxyphenoxide), calcium di(m-methoxyphenoxide), calcium di(p-methoxy-phenoxide), calcium (o-ethoxyphenoxide) and calcium (4-methoxy-1-naphthoxide) and calcium tetrahydrofurfurylate.
5. (Currently Amended) A catalyst system as specified in ~~claim 6~~ claim 4 wherein the organolithium compound is an organomonolithium compound.
6. (Currently Amended) A catalyst system as specified in ~~claim 7~~ claim 5 wherein the molar ratio of the lithium alkoxide to the calcium alkoxide is within the range of about 5:2 to about 10:1.

7. (Currently Amended) A catalyst system as specified in ~~claim 8~~ claim 5 wherein the molar ratio of the alkyl lithium compound to the calcium alkoxide is within the range of about 3:2 to about 4:1.

8. (Currently Amended) A catalyst system as specified in ~~claim 9~~ claim 7 wherein the lithium alkoxide is made by reacting an organolithium compound, metallic lithium or lithium hydride with an alcohol selected from the group consisting of methanol, ethanol, normal-propyl alcohol, isopropyl alcohol, t-butanol, sec-butanol, cyclohexanol, octanol, 2-ethylhexanol, p-cresol, m-cresol, nonyl phenol, hexylphenol, tetrahydrofuryl alcohol, furfuryl alcohol, 3-methyltetrahydrofurfuryl alcohol, oligomer of tetrahydrofurfuryl alcohol, ethylene glycol monophenyl ether, ethylene glycol monobutyl ether, N,N-dimethylethanolamine, N,N-diethylethanolamine, N,N-dibutylethanolamine, N,N-diphenylethanolamine, N-methyldiethanolamine, N-ethyldiethanolamine, N-butyldiethanolamine, N-phenyldiethanolamine, N,N-dimethylpropanolamine, N,N-dibutylpropanolamine, N-methyldipropanolamine, N-ethyldipropanolamine, 1-(2-hydroxyethyl)pyrrolidine, 2-methyl-1-(2-hydroxyethyl)pyrrolidine, 1-piperidineethanol, 2-phenyl-1-piperidineethanol, 2-ethyl-1-piperidinepropanol, N-β-hydroxyethylmorpholine, 2-ethyl-N-8-hydroxyethylmorpholine, 1-piperazineethanol, 1-piperazinepropanol, N,N'-bis(β-hydroxyethyl)piperazine, N,N'-bis(Y-hydroxypropyl)-piperazine, 2-(β-hydroxyethyl)pyridine and 2-(γ-hydroxypropyl)pyridine.

9. (Currently Amended) A catalyst system as specified in ~~claim 10~~ claim 8 wherein the organolithium compound is selected from the group consisting of ethyl lithium, isopropyl lithium, n-butyllithium, sec-butyllithium, tert-octyl lithium, phenyl lithium, 2-naphthyllithium, 4-butyphenyllithium, 4-tolyllithium, 4-phenylbutyllithium, cyclohexyl lithium and hexyl lithium.

10. (Currently Amended) A catalyst system as specified in ~~claim 11~~ claim 9 wherein the molar ratio of the lithium alkoxide to the calcium alkoxide is within the range of about 3:1 to about 5:1.

11. (Currently Amended) A catalyst system as specified in ~~claim 12~~ claim 10 wherein the molar ratio of the alkyl lithium compound to the calcium alkoxide is within the range of about 2:1 to about 3:1.
12. (Original) A catalyst system which consists essentially of (a) an organometallic compound of a metal selected from the group consisting of lithium, potassium, magnesium, sodium, aluminum, zinc and tin, (b) a calcium compound and (c) a lithium alkoxide.
13. (Currently Amended) A catalyst system as specified in ~~claim 21~~ claim 12 wherein said calcium compound is selected from the group consisting of calcium carboxylates, calcium phenolates, calcium amines, calcium amides, calcium halides, calcium nitrates, calcium sulfates, calcium phosphates, calcium alcoholates and calcium ditetrahydrofurfurylate.
14. (Currently Amended) A catalyst system as specified in ~~claim 22~~ claim 13 wherein said organometallic compound is selected from the group consisting of organolithium compounds, organopotassium compounds, organomagnesium compounds and organosodium compound.
15. (Currently Amended) A catalyst system as specified in ~~claim 23~~ claim 14 wherein the calcium compound is selected from the group consisting of calcium alcoholates, calcium carboxylates and calcium phenolates.
16. (Currently Amended) A catalyst system as specified in ~~claim 24~~ claim 15 wherein the organometallic compound is an organolithium compound.
17. (Currently Amended) A catalyst system as specified in ~~claim 23~~ claim 16 wherein the calcium compound is a calcium alcoholate.
18. (Currently Amended) A catalyst system as specified in ~~claim 21~~ claim 12 wherein the molar ratio of the lithium alkoxide to the calcium compound is within the range

of about 2:1 to about 20:1; and wherein the molar ratio organometallic compound to the calcium compound is within the range of about 1:1 to about 6:1.

19. (Currently Amended) A catalyst system as specified in ~~claim 22~~ claim 12 wherein the molar ratio of the lithium alkoxide to the calcium compound is within the range of about 5:2 to about 10:1; and wherein the molar ratio organometallic compound to the calcium compound is within the range of about 3:2 to about 4:1.

20. (Currently Amended) A catalyst system as specified in ~~claim 23~~ claim 12 wherein the molar ratio of the lithium alkoxide to the calcium compound is within the range of about 3:1 to about 5:1; and wherein the molar ratio organometallic compound to the calcium compound is within the range of about 2:1 to about 3:1.

21. (Original) A process for the preparation of a calcium alkoxide which comprises reacting calcium hydroxide with an alcohol at a temperature which is within the range of about 150°C to about 250°C to produce the calcium alkoxide.

22. (Currently Amended) A process as specified in ~~claim 35~~ claim 21 wherein the reaction is carried out in the presence of an excess of the alcohol.

23. (Currently Amended) A process as specified in ~~claim 36~~ claim 22 wherein the alcohol is of the formula ROH wherein R represents a moiety selected from the group consisting of 2-ethylhexyl groups, nonylphenyl groups, dodecylphenyl groups, tetrahydrofurfuryl groups and furfuryl groups.

24. (Currently Amended) A process as specified in ~~claim 37~~ claim 23 which further comprises removing the excess alcohol by distillation after the completion of the reaction.

25. (Currently Amended) A process as specified in ~~claim 38~~ claim 23 wherein said reaction is carried out at a temperature which is within the range of about 175°C to about 200°C.

26. (Currently Amended) A process as specified in ~~claim 38~~ herein claim 23 wherein said reaction is carried out at a temperature which is above the boiling point of the alcohol.

27. (Currently Amended) A process as specified in ~~claim 40~~ claim 23 which further comprises recovering the calcium alkoxide by dissolving it in an organic solvent.

28. (Currently Amended) A process as specified in ~~claim 41~~ claim 23 wherein the organic solvent is selected from the group consisting of ethyl benzene, toluene and xylene.

29. (Currently Amended) A ~~process~~ catalyst system as specified in claim 1 wherein said catalyst system is further comprised of an amine

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